

Please join me in [celebrating](#) Cinco de Mayo, a day that represents the importance of freedom, liberty and determination for the people of Mexico and for Mexican-Americans. On May 5, 1862, untrained, outnumbered, and outgunned Mexican forces--determined to protect their land--successfully defended the town of Puebla against the French Army.

This date is of special significance because it reminds us that all peoples -- regardless of their race or color -- need freedom, liberty and self-determination and that all cultures are worthy of respect. For Mexico, Cinco de Mayo has become a symbol of unity and patriotism in its history. In the United States, it is also a celebration of the rich cultural heritage Mexican Americans have brought with them here.

As you know, Hispanics are the fastest-growing minority group in the United States and are the largest minority-owned business community—with a 1.6 million businesses generating annual revenues of more than \$221 billion. 17.2% of the [constituents](#) of our district are Hispanic and 9.9% of the firms in the district are

[Hispanic-owned](#)

. Their entrepreneurial energy is vital to the Hispanic community and strengthens the American economy at-large.

Today, I say thank you to the Hispanic community for making our economy stronger and our culture more vibrant. I hope you join me this Saturday in celebrating Cinco de Mayo and appreciating the values, traditions, and contributions of the Mexican culture.